

Message Text

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TO USIA WASHDC

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

SECSTATE WASHDC 4668

UNCLAS BANGKOK 16629

FOR IEA AND ICS/D, CINCPAC FOR USIA ADVISOR, STATE FOR CU/EA

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS -- JULY 22 - 28, 1977

1. RTG-PRESS DANCE CONTINUES:

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE RTG AND THE NEWSPAPERS WORSENEED WHEN ALL FIVE JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATIONS DECIDED TO BOYCOTT THE COMMITTEE ORGANIZED BY THE RTG TO DISCUSS NEWSMEN'S DEMANDS. ONE OF THE DEMANDS WAS THAT THE POSITION OF PRESS OFFICER ADVISOR, OFTEN USED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO CLOSE DOWN NEWS-PAPERS, BE ABOLISHED. THE WALKOUT WAS PRECIPITATED WHEN THE RTG DECIDED THAT THE PRESS OFFICER ADVISOR, FAR FROM HAVING HIS POSITION ABOLISHED, SHOULD BE A COMMITTEE MEMBER. A COMPROMISE WAS REACHED JULY 27 WHEN ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES AGREED THAT THE PRESS ADVISOR COULD REMAIN ON THE COMMITTEE, BUT THAT A SUBCOMMITTEE, ON WHICH HE WOULD NOT SIT, WOULD BE FORMED TO CONSIDER THE NEWSMEN'S RESOLUTIONS. A JOURNALIST ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT TOLD USIS THAT THE NEWSMEN WILL CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE. "WE HAVE LOST OUR FREEDOM NOW, SO WE HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO LOSE AND EVERYTHING TO GAIN," THE PRESIDENT SAID.

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2. CHRISTOPHER VISIT WELL COVERED:

THE 30-HOUR VISIT OF DEPUTY SECRETARY WARREN CHRISTOPHER JULY 24-25 RECEIVED HEAVY COVERAGE IN THE PRESS, BUT, UNTIL NOW, HAS ELICITED NO COMMENT. (SEE BANGKOK 16336 FOR DETAILS.)

3. TOP CHINESE PAPER SUPPORTS U.S. ON VIETNAM AID:

EDITORIAL JULY 22 IN HSING HSIAN JIT PAO, THAI-LAND'S LARGEST CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER, SUPPORTED THE U.S. STAND ON NOT GIVING AID TO VIETNAM. REVIEWING RECENT KISSINGER CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY, THE EDITORIAL SAID OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND ANY WASHINGTON OBLIGATION TO AID VIETNAM, "NOW IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE BLAMED IS HANOI, NOT THE U.S." (SEE BANGKOK 16091 FOR MORE QUOTES.)

4. UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS BEGIN CALLS:

NEWLY ARRIVED CAP NELSON STEPHENS ACCOMPANIED HIGHER EDUCATION AMERICAN SPECIALISTS ANDREW BILLINGSLEY, PRESIDENT OF MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, AND PAUL BRAGDON, PRESIDENT OF REED COLLEGE, ON VISITS WITH RECTORS OF BANGKOK'S MAJOR UNIVERSITIES MONDAY AND TUESDAY. ON WEDNESDAY, THE TRIO TRAVELED TO SOUTH THAILAND WHERE MEETINGS WERE SCHEDULED AT HAADYAI AND PATTANI CAMPUSES OF PRINCE OF SONGKHLA UNIVERSITY AND SONGKHLA CAMPUS OF SRINAKARINWIROT UNIVERSITY.

5. FINAL LUSE CONCERT:

CLASSICAL GUITARIST ROBERT LUSE PRESENTED HIS FOURTH
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AND FINAL THAILAND CONCERT FRIDAY TO A CAPACITY AUDIENCE WHICH WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY THAI. POST MET LUSE'S HIGH TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS IN THE BNC'S 700-SEAT AUDITORIUM, AND RESPONSE TO THE CONCERT WAS ENTHUSIASTIC. A LONG-TERM OBSERVER NOTED AFTER THE CONCERT THAT THAI AUDIENCES IN BANGKOK RECENTLY APPEAR MORE SOPHISTICATED AND RECEPTIVE TO SERIOUS WESTERN MUSIC.

6. PUBLIC POLICY DISCUSSION:

POLITICAL SCIENTIST THOMAS CASSTEVENS, RETURNING TO THE U.S. AFTER A FULBRIGHT YEAR IN INDIA, STOPPED IN BANGKOK TO LECTURE ON "PUBLIC POLICY AND BUREAUCRACY" FOR A SMALL GROUP FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION OF THAILAND.
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